

7 FAM 1500 OVERSEAS ABSENTEE VOTING

7 FAM 1510 THE RIGHT TO VOTE WHILE ABROAD

7 FAM 1511 VOTING ABROAD ENCOURAGED

(TL:CON-54; 5-19-93)

The Department of State, along with each U.S. military department and the U.S. Coast Guard, has an important, legally mandated role in assisting U.S. citizens overseas who wish to exercise their right to vote. Posts should encourage all U.S. citizens within their consular jurisdiction to register and vote in all U.S. elections--Federal, State, and local. Posts should ensure that voters are provided with information necessary to register and to vote, election dates, and other similar information of a general, non-partisan nature. Becoming informed about the candidates and their views and about specific election issues is the responsibility of the voter.

7 FAM 1512 VARIETY OF PERTINENT LAWS AND PROCEDURES

(TL:CON-54; 5-19-93)

Voters of the United States elect more than 500,000 public officials in 6,400 political subdivisions such as counties, cities, towns, and parishes in the United States. Except for a few federally imposed standards, the states generally are free to impose their own election laws and procedures. As a result, voting rules differ among thousands of different jurisdictions. These rules complicate *the process of assisting U.S. citizens abroad in exercising their right to vote. Posts should always refer to the most current edition of the Voting Assistance Guide, published by the Federal Voting Assistance Program, within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, for procedural information.*

7 FAM 1513 AUTHORITY

(TL:CON-54; 5-19-93)

The U.S. Government is required by law to assist overseas citizens to register and vote by absentee ballot. The statutory and legal references are:

(1) *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986, P.L.99-410. The Act is reproduced in the Voting Assistance Guide and codified as 42 U.S.C. 1973ff - 1973ff-b, and in sections of 18 and 39 USC.*

(2) *Executive Order No. 12642 of June 8, 1988, 53 F.R. 21975 (June 10, 1988), by which the President designated the Secretary of Defense with primary responsibility for federal functions under the Act.*

7 FAM 1514 DEFINITIONS

(TL:CON-54; 5-19-93)

a. "Domicile" (Voting Residence) is the place where a person has a true, fixed, and permanent home or ties, and to which, whenever absent, the person *has the intention of returning. It is the address that generally ties the voter into the precinct in which the voter intends to vote.*

b. "General Election" means an election held to choose candidates nominated in the primary (or by convention or caucus), for Federal, State, and local offices.

c. "*Primary or Primary Election*" means an election held before a general election to nominate a political party's candidates for office.

d. "Registration" *is the process whereby a prospective voter is required to establish identity and residence prior to an election in order to be declared eligible to vote.*

e. "State", for purposes of the Act, includes all of the following political jurisdictions:

- (1) The 50 States;
- (2) The District of Columbia;
- (3) The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and
- (4) The Territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

f. *Other definitions appear in Appendix A of the Voting Assistance Guide.*

7 FAM 1515 THROUGH 1519 UNASSIGNED